1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

The landed, slave-owning aristocrat was the master of Recôncavo society. The extended aristocratic family was the basic social, economic, and political unit of colonial society. The upper class of the Recôncavo, composed of inter-related family units, continued without substantial alteration until the twentieth century.

Despite the predominance of sugar cane and the engenho in the colonial Recôncavo--and in the literature on the region--other products and other institutions were important. It is clear that tobacco and manioc were the chief secondary agricultural products, but the development of the associated institutions is not documented. Presumably a class of small semi-subsistence cultivators occupied the lands unsuitable for sugar cane. This class probably was composed of whites lacking the capital for plantation agriculture and freed mulattoes and slaves--manumission was very common in the Recôncavo. The chief commercial product of these small farmers was rolo or corda tobacco (similar to a "twist" of tobacco),[22] and probably to a lesser extent farinha de mandioca (manioc flour). In addition, corn, beans, rice, and bananas were produced.

The colonial economy of the Recôncavo was not self-sufficient, in spite of the production of food crops and meat animals on small farms and on plantations. Near the beginning of colonization the livestock ranching industry, originating in coastal areas like the Recôncavo, migrated into the interior of the Northeast. Thereafter a strong current of trade in animals, especially cattle, flowed into the Recôncavo from the São Francisco valley, from Ceará, and probably from the sertão of Bahia between the coast and the mountains. These animals were exchanged at the cattle fairs--notably at Feira de Santana--for the products of the coast and for imports from abroad.

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11 • Brazil SL1

BB 175 178 249 257 433

The world-wide expansion of sugar cane production, the development of the sugar beet, and the improvement of sugar technology had changed sugar from an expensive luxury to a relatively cheap semi-necessity. The sugar industry of the Recôncavo always had been based upon the production of small quantities of a high-value product. Only with great reluctance and considerable difficulty could it convert itself to cheap mass production.

B 175 178 433 439

The Brazilian industry as a whole was unable to compete effectively in the international mass market. Brazilian exports in the early twentieth century dropped to one-half, even one-third of the nineteenth century level. At the London Conference in 1937, Brazil could claim as her quota only 1.6 per cent of the total international sugar trade.

B BB 175 43 249 257

The Brazilian industry maintained itself behind a tariff wall. The more efficient and strategically located sugar areas of Campos (Rio de Janeiro) and São Paulo had access to growing local markets in the expanding Central-South. But Bahia had no sizable local market, and distance limited its access to the main Brazilian markets. Moreover, it was an inefficient, high-cost producer. Under these circumstances it could not compete in a free-market situation.

B 175 257 178

For the sugar industry as a whole the difficulties of adjustment to the almost complete loss of foreign markets were increased by the necessity for sweeping technological reorganization.[40] Until

B [249]

the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Brazil's entire sugar production was manufactured in small and primitive *engenhos* which used the open pan method and produced dark, low-quality sugar. The development of the steam engine, vacuum pans, centrifuges, and filters had made possible a mill both larger and more efficient. Under the name of *engenho central* (central mill), the new industrial complex

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
East Brazil SN1
Northeast Brazil SO1
Brazil SL1

EB NB 175 249 257 B 175 654 249 257 B [647]

In the first quarter of the twentieth century this competition of the more efficient and centrally located sugar industry of the Central-South threatened to bankrupt the Northeast.[44] Because the nation feared that a collapse of the sugar economy in the Northeast would destroy the social and economic base of these states, steps were taken to stabilize the industry. In 1933 the Instituto do Açúcar e do Álcool (Institute of Sugar and Alcohol) was created as a semi-autonomous branch of the federal government. Its purpose was to stabilize prices, maintain an equilibrium of production through quotas, and to control foreign sale of sugar. The effect of this program has been to subsidize the less efficient industry of the Northeast at the expense of the industry of the Central-South.

NB EB 178 249 257 43

During World War II temporary disruption of the national production quota system allowed the Central-South to expand, an advance which it continued to maintain after the war. This expansion limited the markets available to the sugar industry of the Northeast.

BB 178 249 257 433 B [433]

In Bahia the relative decline in sugar production, begun in the 1860's, continued steadily except for a break during and following World War I. In 1952 the mills of Bahia produced only 60,279 tons of (white) sugar of a total Brazilian production of 1,785,017 tons.[45]

BB 175 178 249 43

While the sugar industry of the Recôncavo was losing markets in the initial half of the twentieth century, the tobacco industry was able to maintain and in some cases even to expand its markets. Although the maximum level of export of Brazilian tobacco was reached in 1902 (50,000 tons), the decline thereafter was only moderate, and the export was stabilized, except for World War II, at about 30,000 tons, 80 per cent of which was from Bahia. In 1865

BB 175 277 472

the first cigarette factory in Bahia had been founded.[46] Small operators had produced cigars for some time, but by the beginning

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
Northeast Brazil SO1

NB
244
252

> Manioc is generally cultivated by hand by small cultivators on land near the huts in which they live--[land] called the mandiocal, very common in the interior of the state. The immediate preoccupation of the sertanejo [countryman of the interior] after the construction of his house is the planting of manioc to secure cheap food--either sweet manioc or bitter manioc, which is transformed into flour. All the family are employed in this work. The industry of flour production is rudimentary and it uses simple processes.

BB
NB
244
43
161

> The cultivation of manioc in Bahia is to provide flour for the local market, since the state does not export this product. The development of this culture is, therefore, closely related to the distribution of population, the most productive zones which are noted on the map corresponding to regions where the population is most dense. It is perfectly reasonable that the most productive region corresponds to the Recôncavo, where there is concentrated the mass of the population of Bahia and a large number of towns and cities, the most important and populous in the state. . . . . it is the region of the most highly developed agriculture in the state; it united a relatively dense rural population with manioc, almost always cultivated on a large scale in the zones of the cultivation of tobacco.[6]

BB
244
311
453

As is indicated in the foregoing quotation, the distributional pattern of manioc reveals a very close association with the cultivation of tobacco and with certain urban centers. But as might be expected in view of the broad environmental tolerance of manioc, its distribution within the Recôncavo is not directly determined by any particular physical factor. Manioc is grown in all parts of the Recôncavo, excepting only the compact pockets of sugar cane cultivation. Only one município, São Sebastião, grew less than 100 hectares or produced less than 1,000 tons of tubers in 1948. In eight municípios the area of manioc cultivation exceeded 1,000 hectares, and the production was more than 10,000 tons in each. About 28 per cent of the cropland of the Recôncavo was in mandioca.[7]

The major concentration of manioc cultivation (Maps 22 and 23) and production (Maps 24 and 25) is along the eastern edge of the Crystalline Uplands in the Southwestern Recôncavo, where in 1948 three municípios[8] grew 54 per cent of the Recôncavo's 22,472 hectares of

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 154]

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

277 the more expensive varieties are hand made. The fillers and inner wrappers of the cigars are made from local tobaccos. Local leaf also [439] is used to a very limited extent for the outer wrappers, but almost all of the high quality cigars are made from wrapper leaf imported [471] from Havana, Sumatra, or the Connecticut Valley. The ownership of all the cigar factories is concentrated in three companies, all of which [439] have their headquarters in Salvador. The cigars produced in the Recôncavo are sold throughout Brazil.

182 Conclusion. Many of the features of the systems of marketing, • 43 transportation, and processing which are characteristic of the Recôncavo 44 are effective in unifying the region. In particular, the centralized 184 marketing and economic control of the production and processing of tobacco and sugar draw both the tobacco and manioc region and the sugar cane region closer to Salvador. At the same time, the differences in marketing techniques and the separate channels of control which are associated with these two products accentuate the sub-regional pattern 182 of the two crop regions. The system of general marketing exemplified 438 by the municipal markets might at first glance seem to be a focus 443 for local rather than regional interests. However, as has been seen, 184 there are itinerant merchants who pass from market to market throughout the Recôncavo. Moreover, the major public markets, such as Feira de Santana and Salvador, draw large numbers of people from most of the rural sections. Even the local marketing institutions contribute to the identification of the people of this area with the region.

1:Haskins K-4,5 (1952-1954)1956 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
Brazil SL1

In the surrounding sertão livestock production is the areally and, in many cases, economically dominant activity; the Recôncavo is primarily a region of crop cultivation.

The Recôncavo is a functional unit in the economic organization of commercial agriculture and marketing. Salvador, with one-third of the people of the region, is the primary market center. The credit essential to the production of tobacco passes from the city to the countryside, while the leaf is either shipped to the city for export or is sent to local cigar factories controlled by Salvador companies. Similarly, the headquarters of the sugar industry and the chief market for its products is Salvador. Feira de Santana is also a functional center for the region, since in its markets the agricultural and industrial products which either originate in the Recôncavo or are imported through Salvador are exchanged for the livestock, crops, and extractive products of the sertão.

Many of the features of the agricultural system of the Recôncavo are also characteristic of Brazil. Both the land rotation system and the permanent monoculture are basic Brazilian agricultural systems. Agricultural technology, in the Recôncavo and in most parts of Brazil, is relatively backward. Brazilian agriculture is labor extravagant, and there is a constant falta de braços, but with few attempts at mechanization. Agriculture is highly speculative, whether tobacco in the Recôncavo or coffee in São Paulo. The large property—latifundia—and the class organization with which it is associated are important in the region and in the country as a whole. There are large numbers of semi-dependent small cultivators in the Recôncavo as in other parts of Brazil. Both the region and the nation are very dependent upon the sale of agricultural products to distant markets.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

As a result, owners have to be satisfied with higher costs than they feel necessary and less profit than they think possible, the difference going to the overseer, rather than accept the complete failure of the plantation Overseers, foremen, and owners are all aware of the situation, but politeness, the traditional respect patterns, and the unwillingness to compete openly keep the situation covert. 249* 463 466 571

Nevertheless, on Fazenda das Moças, in spite of these difficulties there is considerable cooperation between Dona Sinhá and Seu Paulo. The duties of the overseer are confined generally to the plantation itself--seeing that the work is done, the cane planted, cultivated, harvested, and delivered to the factory as expediently as possible. The duties of Dona Sinhá are mainly concerned with finance, with arranging ready funds to meet the current expenses of the plantation. The practice of mortgaging crops did not end with the abolition of slavery, and it is the owner's task to juggle funds, loans, and interest so she will have enough money to improve and increase the yield of her plantation. In general the owners of single plantations rarely have enough funds to carry them through the year. Payrolls are met throughout the year with advances on the estimated harvest made by the factory, by the banks, or by the Cooperative of Sugar-Cane Growers and Suppliers. Thus when the season ends the owner is already in debt, part of which he must pay off in order to finance the coming year. There are two problems constantly present in the struggle to increase the size of the harvest: cost of production, and the antiquated methods used on the private plantations, where practically all work is done by hand. 249* 463 426 [433]

Table 1 shows production, costs, and profits for the harvests of the years 1947-48, 1948-49, and 1949-50 at Fazenda das Moças. The drop in production and the rise in costs in the years 1948-49 were attributed to a slackening of the vigilance of Dona Sinhá and to a poor overseer. It was at the end of this year that Seu Paulo assumed the position of overseer of the plantation. The following year showed a great improvement which has continued. for the 1950-51 harvest produced 6,000 tons, the highest output of any private plantation in the Recôncavo. Future harvests are expected to go well above this. In addition to changing the overseer, and in the following year the foreman, Dona Sinhá was able to borrow enough money to purchase the tractor mentioned earlier. The next year, as a result of the evident success of the new combination, two four- 249* 43 [426] [407] [493]

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

TABLE 1
PRODUCTION, COSTS, PROFITS: FAZENDA DAS MOÇAS

1947-1948	
4,000 tons of cane at the selling price of Cr$81,40 a ton	Cr$325.600,00
Cost of production	206.244,00
Profit	119.356,00
1948-1949	
2,500 tons of cane at Cr$88,90	222.250,00
Cost of production	225.198,00
Loss	32.948,00
1949-1950	
5,000 tons of cane at Cr$107,40	537.000,00
Cost of production	319.248,00
Profit	217.751,00

wheeled carts were added which could be drawn by the tractor, thus cutting down transportation costs. Recently a jeep was acquired to pull the carts, and a second tractor equipped with the mechanism to cultivate cane fields was purchased.

Still, the plantation is heavily in debt, and any profits are immediately used for improvements or for paying off debts. Moreover, the cost of tractors, jeeps, and fertilizer is very high since they are imported products. Because of the dollar exchange rate their cost is extravagantly high in Brazil, compared with the United States. In addition, the plantation is still burdened with the old equipment and the necessity of pasture for the oxen, which cuts down the acreage available for planting. Animal traction cannot yet be entirely dispensed with, because of the condition of the soil in winter. The problem of maintaining the old system of work as well as introducing the new, which can only slowly pay for itself, is considerable. Dona Sinhá is faced with the dilemma of difficult natural conditions which, while good in many ways for sugar cane, impede the application of modern techniques. She is also faced with personnel problems in relation to the overseer. One solution is clearly apparent and has been adopted by Dona Sinhá: to spend more and more time on the plantation, sharing more and more work with Seu Paulo. This of course is a complete break with the past traditions of the plantation master. It is a difficult break for both parties concerned. Dona Sinhá misses her city

463
252
463
463
462
252
430

vo. There are about twenty women in the town who are thus employed constantly, and others who work part-time with the fish. They go down to the beach, carrying five-gallon gasoline cans, when they see the fishermen coming in, and buy the fish by the canful at about Cr$25,00 a can, sometimes buying as many as ten canfuls. An exceptional catch for a day will run well over fifty cans, especially during the winter months. The women then take the fish home, clean them and pack them in salt for twenty-four hours, after which they put them on spits, two narrow slivers of wood cut from the dendê palm. Five fish go on each two spits. They are then hung out to dry in the sun for about two days. If it rains, the drying takes longer, and frequently many are lost. Few of the women ever become accustomed to the odor of the salted, drying fish, and they complain bitterly about it. But they know that there is always a market for the dried product, and this compensates to some extent for the unpleasantness involved. A can of fish usually provides 150 to 200 spits, and they are sold for Cr$25,00 to Cr$30,00 a hundred spits. The price is generally slightly higher if they are sold at the weekly Monday market in Centro, to which the women as a rule go themselves, or to which they send the fish with a friend. Otherwise, they are sold to the occasional tropeiros de cima[3] who come to town to buy them at a slightly lower price. It is said that the small dried fish are considered a fine dish by the people of the sertão.

[251]

[443]

Other women prepare shrimp in much the same manner, although the prices are higher. A can of shrimp costs between Cr$100,00 and Cr$150,00 depending upon the size of the catch and the season of the year, for during Lent and especially during Holy Week, when the demand is greater, all prices of fish and seafood rise. A can of shrimp gives two hands (duas mãos), or forty spits, of shrimp, which are sold at the average of Cr$100,00 a hand; the price of the finished product varies with the price of the fresh shrimp. However, a man in Vila Recôncavo recently built an icehouse, and the women have worked less with shrimp, for the fishermen sell directly to

463
462
435
[252]
462
463
438
251

3. Tropeiros de cima (troopers from up north) are men from the sertão who descend to the Recôncavo with mules loaded with farina to sell, and return north with fish and fruit from the Recôncavo.

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

463
312
[492]
[482]

two miles west of the town to another well which did not have to serve so many people. Many women also made this trip, with five-gallon cans of water on their heads, and with their children carrying smaller cans.

463
523
422

In the past many women of this group possessed heirlooms: jewelry handed down to them by their female ancestors who had been favorite slaves of their white masters and who had received valuable brooches, necklaces, rings, and earrings from them, in accordance with the old pattern of luxury which extended even to certain slaves. In most cases this jewelry has now been sold at some time of emergency to antique dealers who scour the rural areas looking for such treasures, which are now highly valuable and sought by collectors.

463

Group 3 is made up of independent artisans, that is, people who are self-employed. It differs from Group 1 in that its members rarely employ the services of other people in personal or household activities, although gardeners, carpenters, tailors, fishermen, bricklayers, and barbers do employ people in their business. The large number of men employed by the bricklayers should be explained, as it is not a permanent category. The census from which these data were taken was made in June, 1950, at the height of the work of paving the town streets with cobblestones. A number of bricklayers had come to town for this work, and they as well as the resident bricklayers had to employ workmen to do the work with them for the municipal government. When the paving was finished there was no longer a need for so many bricklayers, and they either left or went into fishing or some other occupation. Since the data were collected, the tailors have also moved to another town as a result of the lack of business in Vila Recôncavo.

463
226
43

The majority of men in this group are the fishermen, who number 132, plus 5 who are employed rather than self-employed. They fish from canoes, with several types of nets, for a large variety of fish. The federal statistics agent lists seventeen types of fish, including shrimp, giving the following weight and price for the year's activities: 129,070 kilograms and Cr$921.540,00 (slightly under $50,000.00). Shrimp earns slightly more than half this total, Cr$468.000,00, although the amount in kilograms is only 26,000. Xangó, already mentioned, is the second most profitable product, bringing in Cr$195.000,00 for 65,000 kilograms. The statistics agent admits that these figures are approximations

2: Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

463
226
43

based on what the fishermen claim to have caught, for the fish is not weighed and the price is based on a low average price per kilogram for all types of fish. As a rule fish is sold by the can and not by weight. The one man in town who buys fish for his icehouse usually buys "by the eye," that is, by estimation of how many kilograms he is getting. If anything, however, the above figures err by underestimation.

463
226
227

The life of the fisherman is a rugged one, and his schedule follows the incoming and outgoing tides. There are six types of nets most commonly used: the circular casting net (tarrafa) and the deep net (rêde de fundo) or drag net (rêde de arrasto) to catch shrimp; the ressac and abaladeira, the former for xangó and the latter for sardines and tainha (a small sardine-like fish); and the calão and calãozinho for the larger fish. These are the most popular nets, but there also exist several others used with less frequency, such as the arraieira, a net used only to catch the arraia, or skate fish; the pesqueiro, a pole-and-net trap to catch all kinds of large fish; the caçoeira, to catch the caçao and other very large fish; and the jererê, a small basketlike net used by women and children along the shore to catch small fish and crabs. In addition, a long line with many hooks on it (grosseira), baited to catch large fish, is used. The hook and line is very seldom used. Fish poison is employed. Tingui, a toxic plant, is mashed and scattered on the water in the mangue at low tide, and it stupefies the caramurú and miroró, two inhabitants of the mangue.

226

The favorite shrimp banks are directly in front of the town of Vila Recôncavo, at the mouth of the river which empties into the Bay of All Saints. The preferred time to use the circular casting net for shrimp is early on a windless morning, during the hours of full tide when the incoming surge has ended and the outgoing current has not yet started. The shrimp fleet seen from the heights of the town presents a scene of utmost tranquility, for there is little action involved other than the quick throwing out and the slow pulling in and folding of the net. Tarrafa fishing is a one-man job. The man paddles a canoe out to the area where the shrimp are usually to be found, which in this case is a large submerged rock on the edge of the river channel, around which shrimp are numerous. Arriving there the fisherman ships his paddle and begins to cast his net, standing in the stern of the canoe. As a rule there are between twenty and thirty fishermen casting in and about the same place. The net is cone-shaped, the apex being

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1967 SO11 Bahia Brasiliana SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

is very rough, though strong. Most of the men complain about it, for it cuts their hands when they are fishing and the action of salt water on the cuts inflames their hands badly.

There are between seventy-five and one hundred canoes in Vila Recôncavo, of all sizes, from 16 to about 50 feet long. They come from the southern part of the state, and cost between Cr$1.000,00 and Cr$6.000,00 apiece, depending on their size. They are made of vinhatico preto, a large tree from which an entire canoe can be hollowed out. As the canoes grow older, they are strengthened inside by the addition of ribs. The center support (pé do banco) has a hole in it through which a mast can be stepped for sailing. The fishermen use a variety of sails, but usually a simple square sail called traquête. Four flour sacks sewn together make a passable square sail. The canoes last a long time and are handed down from generation to generation. A hundred years is not an uncommon age for such a craft.

The majority of fishermen cannot swim well and have a great respect for the water on two counts: the water is deep, which to them implies danger, and it is said to hide large, man-eating fish. There are stories of three men who have disappeared in the last few years, snatched away by fish. One was a baixador, and the other two fell overboard. Falling is not uncommon, for often a man steps on a small fish on the bottom of the canoe or simply slips on the wet wood, loses his balance, and goes overboard, as the canoes are narrow-beamed and unstable. In their canoes they are fearless, and will go anywhere in any weather. Severe storms which arise suddenly are ridden out in the canoe, which generally lies at anchor while the men lie under cover of the sail, peering out occasionally to see if the weather is clearing. Many of them, however, become violently ill on a larger boat during a storm.

Winter is the most productive season for fishing, although the most uncomfortable. There are many storms, and the rains are more or less constant. But the fishermen say that the mixture of salt water with the fresh water from small rivers emptying into the bay seems to produce many more fish than in the summer months. The fishermen dress only in a pair of shorts and a straw hat when fishing, and remain in the cold rain for hours on end. Colds are common among them, as is rheumatism among the older men.

There is always a market for fish. There is a discussion currently going on in Vila Recôncavo, for some of the older

2t Hutchinson E-4,5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

226 men say that the fish are leaving, while others say there are
● 43 just as many as ever. It is a difficult thing to prove one way or the other, for written records of the annual catches are only recent. However, there is no such thing as being unable to sell the fish they bring in. Many people in town have increased their consumption of fresh fish as a result of inflation, for it is less expensive than dried or fresh meat. The fishermen themselves eat a great deal of fish, always keeping enough out of a catch for their own family. The planters of the rural area complain that the fresh fish never arrive at the plantations any more as they did in the past. This is probably due to the icehouse in the town. The fishermen sell first to their "usual customers," the women who work with xangó and shrimp; what is left is sold to the icehouse to be packed and shipped to Bahia, rather than being sent out to the country.

226 The jereré, a small basketlike net built around an iron ring 1 1/2 feet in circumference, is used by women and children along the shore and is part of a subsistence activity. It catches only a small crab (siri), an occasional eel, and other small fish which are cooked for the table in the form of moqueca, a sort of stew highly seasoned with peppers and dendê oil. The tideswamps abound in a large crab called the caranguejo, which is also highly prized for the table. Children often catch these, but a man who does so is called a caranguejeiro, a derogatory term. The hunter seeks the crab by sticking his arm down into its hole, which is usually very deep, at least arm's length. As a result he is always covered with the thick black mud so typical of the tideswamps. Often a tropeiro de cima comes to the town and commissions someone to catch the crabs, which he wraps carefully in mud and leaves and carries to the northern hinterland to sell.

463 The second largest subgroup in Group 3 is composed of the
241 twenty-four gardeners (roçeiros) who are engaged in small-scale commercial farming, rather than subsistence horticulture. They live in town and have their small fields on the outskirts of Vila Recôncavo. All of these fields are located on the plantation Engenho Da Vila ("P" on map of community), and they range from one, two, or three acres in size to as many as fifteen acres, rented from the plantation at Cr$100,00 an acre per year. The major crops are manioc, bananas, and to a lesser extent tobacco, sugar cane for chewing (cana de chupar), corn, beans, and squash. Because there are only 265

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11

VILA RECÔNCAVO

[Town Life]

Because there are only 265 acres of manioc under cultivation in the entire county, production is far below the amount of farina consumed, and it is necessary to import the milled manioc tuber which constitutes the major dietary item of the people. In 1951 a municipal law was passed prohibiting the exportation of farina. Three times during the author's stay in the town there was a pronounced lack of farina, when there was almost none to be bought and its price per liter rose from one to three cruzeiros. That year's drought was also partly responsible for the shortage.

Bananas are the only commercial export crop of the gardeners. There are approximately 15,000 banana trees in the county, producing for the commercial market an annual production of 177,000 arms (cachos) of bananas, providing an income of Cr$500.000,00. The fruits are sold to a middleman from Bahia who knows most of the gardeners in the area. Once a week, or every two weeks, he arrives at the town in a large sailboat to receive the fresh bananas, which he then takes to Bahia and sells. Sometimes a gardener sells an arm of bananas to a woman in town who then resells them to townspeople. Few people in town have to buy them, however, for each household has at least one banana tree in the back yard. An acre of land supports about 144 banana trees, which when well cared for produce 1,500 arms a year. The fruits are sold in cargoes of fifty arms at Cr$160,00 a cargo, so that one acre earns about Cr$5.000,00 a year. This sum is almost entirely profit, for gardeners do most of their own work, except when they have too much land for one man to take care of properly. Hired help is paid in accordance with the service performed: ten cruzeiros for cutting fifty arms of bananas, twenty for transporting them to the dock if the gardener does not have his own animals, and a hundred cruzeiros an acre for "cleaning," i.e., cutting down and burning old stalks and leaves and keeping the weeds cut down.

Manioc presents a slightly different case, for the raw product must be processed before it is consumed. The manioc root from which farina is made is the poisonous variety and must be peeled and grated, pressed to remove the juice, and then toasted. The final product is a white powder, fine or coarse depending upon the type of grater used. Most of the local product is a coarse type (farinha de guerra). One of the gardeners has a flour house where the tubers are converted into flour. He mills his own manioc there and lets others use the machinery, charging them one liter of farina out of each ten they produce.

2: Hutchinson E-4, 5 (1950-1951) 1957 SO11 Bahia Brazilians SO11
VILA RECÔNCAVO

178
249*
571

tory and its fields, and who are slowly drifting away from visiting the factory nucleus.

An overall result of the new conditions between private planters and the factory is a desire on the part of the suppliers of São Pedro to become independent of this outlet. Several of the suppliers are shifting their cane to other neighboring factories, when this is convenient. Most of them are seriously considering shifting to another crop, as will be described below; in fact a goodly proportion of land has already been taken out of sugar-cane production, thus diminishing future cane harvests and endangering the cane supply of Usina São Pedro. [311]

What was formerly a peaceful, "all in the family," almost preservelike area has become an area of tensions and of poor business, and social, relations. The situation has all the possibilities of a traditional sugar-cane kind of land capture. The factory needs land in order to produce more cane so that the mill can operate at capacity. No one is willing to sell to the factory, nor even to supply as much cane as he might under other conditions. But the private planters are dependent upon the factory, economically and for services. Therefore it is an easy matter for the factory to make difficulties for the individual planter, even gradually forcing him into failure, since the planter operates on credit and has little latitude for even a single crop failure. Such a failure gives the factory an opportunity to acquire badly needed lands at a bargain. [452] [425]

The sugar industry in the community of Vila Recôncavo has also undergone changes in the labor aspects, in line with the entire industry. As was pointed out in Chapter 4, the price of the sugar cane and the sugar is artificially regulated, and has been rising slowly over a period of years. However, nationwide social legislation in the past three years has raised the wages of the workers annually, before the price increases were granted by the Institute of Sugar and Alcohol. Spiraling inflation has also helped raise all the costs, of labor, of materials, and of machinery. Whereas prices for the task done have always been fairly well regulated, they have recently become a very strong issue, and there is much worker discontent. The planter, whether private or corporate, is more than ever interested in holding down the costs of his labor supply, since other costs, particularly of machinery and repairs, are soaring, always narrowing the margin between the total cost of production and the established selling price. 178 249* 43 [656] [458] [466]